

DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE


Executive Registry

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10 September 1985

NOTE FOR: Director of Personnel  
FROM: DCI  
SUBJECT: Assessment of Men, Selection  
of Personnel for U.S. Office  
of Strategic Services

Attached for whatever it is worth.

  
William J. Casey

Attachment:  
Subject same as above

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*P-100*

# ASSESSMENT of MEN

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U.S. SELECTION OF PERSONNEL FOR  
THE OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

THE OSS ASSESSMENT STAFF



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## STAFF MEMBERS

The following is a list of the men and women who, for one period or another, served on the various assessment staffs. Most of them contributed something to the contents of this book, at least in its initial stages.

† A single dagger signifies that the person participated in the final five-month period of research and composition (September, 1945, to January, 1946) and/or wrote the first draft of a small section of the book.

‡ A double dagger signifies that the person is one of the five—all participants in the final five-month period of research and composition—who not only wrote the longest sections but assumed responsibility for the final overall revision of the book during the succeeding year (February, 1946 to April, 1947).

The educational or medical institution with which each individual was officially connected before his or her enrollment in the government service is printed in parentheses. The rank of personnel who were in the armed services is the highest attained while the individual worked for the OSS, Schools and Training Branch.

The assessment station at which the person worked is indicated by a letter, as follows:

C—Ceylon	K—Kunming, China
F—Potomac, Maryland	S—Fairfax, Virginia
H—Hsian, China	W—Washington, D.C.
I—Calcutta, India	WS—Doheny Park, California

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## Chapter I

### THE NATURE OF THE TASK

The task confronting the OSS assessment staff was that of developing a system of procedures which would reveal the personalities of OSS recruits to the extent of providing ground for sufficiently reliable predictions of their usefulness to the organization during the remaining years of the war. In this sentence everything hangs on the meaning of "sufficiently reliable predictions."

It is easy to predict precisely the outcome of the meeting of one known chemical with another known chemical in an immaculate test tube. But where is the chemist who can predict what will happen to a known chemical if it meets an unknown chemical in an unknown vessel? And even if all the properties of all the chemicals resident in a given laboratory are exactly defined, is there a chemist who can predict every chemical engagement that will take place if Chance, the blind technician, is in charge of the proceedings? Can a physician, steeped though he may be in the science of his profession, say for certain whether or not the body he has just examined will contract contagious jaundice next summer in Algiers? How, then, can a psychologist foretell with any degree of accuracy the outcomes of future meetings of one barely known personality with hundreds of other undesignated personalities in distant undesignated cities, villages, fields, and jungles that are seething with one knows not what potential harms and benefits? Fortune—call the old hag or beauty what you will—can never be eliminated from the universe of human interactions. And this being forever true, prophetic infallibility is beyond the reach of social scientists.

Furthermore, we would guess that no matter how substantial are the advances of scientific psychology, the best series of predictions of *individual* careers—apperception operating as it does—will involve the play of experienced intuitions, the clinical hunch, products of unconsciously perceived and integrated symptomatic signs. The assessment of men—we trust that Samuel Butler would agree—is the scientific art of arriving at sufficient conclusions from insufficient data.

Within reach of those who are trained in assessment, we hope, are "sufficiently reliable predictions," or "sufficient conclusions," that is to say, predictions or conclusions which will serve, by the elimination of some and the

better placement of others, to decrease the ultimate failures or unsatisfactory performance, by such a number that (i) the *amount saved* plus (ii) the *amount of harm prevented* plus (iii) the *amount gained* is greater than the cost of the assessment program. The *amount saved* can be roughly computed in terms of the average expenditure of money and time (spent by other members of the organization) in training, transporting, housing, and dealing with an individual who in the end proves to be incapable of discharging his duties properly. The most important item, the *amount of harm prevented*, is scarcely calculable. It consists of the friction, the impairment of efficiency and morale, the injury to the reputation of an organization that results from the actions of a man who is stupid, apathetic, sullen, resentful, arrogant, or insulting in his dealings with members of his own unit or of allied units, or with customers or citizens of foreign countries. To this must be added the irreparable damage that can be done by one who blabs. Diminution in the number of men of this stamp—sloths, irritants, bad actors, and free talkers—was one of the prime objects of the assessment program. The *amount gained* is equally hard to estimate. It consists of the average difference between the positive accomplishments of a failure and of a success. An unsatisfactory man, by filling an assignment, deprives the organization of the services of a man who might be capable of a substantial contribution. Some OSS schemes, in fact, were entirely abandoned because in each case the man who arrived in the theater to undertake the project was found to be unsuitable. Thus every pronounced failure costs the organization a good deal of time and money, lowers the efficiency and reputation of one of its units, and, by taking the place of a competent man, prevents the attainment of certain goals.

Needless to say, no OSS official was urged to weigh these subtleties and come out with an answer in dollars and cents. For even if it had been possible to make such an estimate, no use could have been made of it, since the one figure that was needed for an evaluation of the assessment program was not obtainable: the percentage of failures among the thousands of unassessed men and women who had been recruited prior to December, 1943. The available records were not accurate or complete enough to give the staff at Station S this level against which to measure its results, and so at the outset we had to face the fact that we would never know certainly whether we had been an asset or a liability to the OSS.

The chief over-all purpose of the OSS assessment staff—to eliminate the unfit—was similar to that of the conventional screening board, but in certain other respects the task of the former was unique: the number and nature of the billets to be filled by "bodies," the adequacy of the information about the different assignments, the types of men who came to be assessed, the conditions under which the work was done, the kinds of reports that were required, and so forth. A full description of these differences should

constitute the best possible definition of the task undertaken by the psychologists and the psychiatrists of the OSS.

The Office of Strategic Services was a wartime agency set up by the President and Congress to meet special conditions of World War II. It was the first of its kind in the history of the United States. Its functions were varied. On the one hand its purpose was to set up research units in the United States and overseas as well as an elaborate network of agents to gather strategic information concerning the activities and vulnerabilities of the nation's enemies, to analyze and evaluate this information, and to report it to those concerned. On the other hand, its object was to conduct a multiplicity of destructive operations behind enemy lines, to aid and train resistance groups, and, by radio, pamphlets, and other means, to disintegrate the morale of enemy troops and encourage the forces of the underground.

To carry out these functions it was necessary that hundreds of special skills outside the sphere of civilian experience be learned rapidly by thousands of Americans, many of whom did not feel like fighting. And these novel skills, taught by men who had mastered them but recently, had to be put into practice in some of the most inaccessible, least known, and outlandish parts of this broad earth. And here is where General Donovan came in.

General Donovan himself was a mobile unit of the first magnitude. Space was no barrier to him—the Sahara Desert was a little stretch of sand, the Himalayas were a bank of snow, the Pacific was a mere ditch. And, what is more, Time was no problem. Circling the globe, according to good evidence, he would catch up with Time and pass it. No one was at all surprised if he left one morning and returned the previous afternoon.

The General's triumph over the two fundamental dimensions of our universe is certainly the leading reason why OSS men, seen or unseen, were operating on most of the strategic surfaces of the earth.

But more elementary than this—for one has to explain why he was inclined to fly about the way he did—was General Donovan's power to visualize an oak when he saw an acorn. For him the day was never sufficient unto itself: it was always teeming with the seeds of a boundless future. Like Nature, he was prodigal, uncontainable, forelooking, and every completed project bred a host of new ones. His imagination shot ahead, outflying days and distances, and where his imagination went, there would his body go soon afterward, and at every stop, brief as it might be, he would leave a litter of young schemes to be reared and fashioned by his lieutenants and transmuted finally into deeds of daring. This is the key to the problem. It explains why OSS undertook and carried out more different types of enterprises calling for more varied skills than any other single organization of its size in the history of our country.

Now it is not for us to say to what extent these far-flung undertakings

were successful. Our purpose here is merely to call attention to the situation that deserves first place on the list of conditions which differentiated our endeavor from those of most other selections and placement agencies:

**Variety and Novelty of OSS Functions; Variety and Remoteness of the Situations.**—Among the various consequences of this combination of factors, the following deserve mention:

i) It was many months before our conceptions of the different jobs were more than half accurate. We were given the briefest possible time in which to prepare. No one arranged a preliminary world tour for the staff so that the conditions at each base and the operations in progress could be observed at first hand. The information that came in from the theaters was scanty; and even if it had been ample and adapted to our purpose, there would have been too much to learn in the time available, too much to remember. Not until much later did some of us who visited installations in the field come to realize the magnitude of the discrepancy between even the better job descriptions—those received in the later months—and the various dispositions and skills that were actually required in the field.

ii) It was not possible to arrange a unified three-day program, much less a one-day program, which would test so great a variety of functions. It would have been a comparable situation, for example, if a dozen educators were asked to set up a school with a six-month term for the training of farmers, machine workers, salesmen, stockholders, explorers, chemists, diplomats, physicians, philosophers, congressmen, and theologians.

iii) Many of the jobs proposed for candidates were different from anything they had ever done before, and so the staff could not rely on the work histories of these men as evidence of ability or aptitude.

iv) Many foreigners and first-generation Americans were recruited because they were familiar with the language, people, and territory of their respective lands of origin. It was difficult for a staff of Americans to judge men from cultures so diverse and to predict how well they would succeed in dealing with their own countrymen.

Let us now consider these points in more detail, and subsequently a few other points.

**Lack of Adequate Job Descriptions.**—The task assigned to us was to decide in each case whether the candidate was fit or could be made fit for the job designated on the Student Information Sheet which accompanied him. Here and elsewhere the term *job* (or *assignment*, *mission*, *task*) is used to designate (i) a certain *set of functions* constituting a *role* fulfilled in (ii) an *environment* composed of a certain *set of situations* that prevail in a given theater. Thus *job* includes both the *role* (with its functions) and the *en-*

environment (with its situations). Therefore the first thing that the members of the staff should have done was to familiarize themselves with the situations that were likely to be encountered in all the theaters of operation as well as with all the functions that men would be expected to perform there. But since this, as we have said, was not possible at the start, it was necessary to compare the candidate with an abstract idea, or with images that were indefinite or incorrect. The knowledge that many of the candidates were to play parts in unbelievable dramas thousands of miles away served to cast a veil of enchanting irreality over the whole endeavor.

No member of the assessment staff possessed intimate knowledge of more than a small fraction of OSS activities. All of us had a fairly clear idea of the functions of a secretary, an office clerk, an administrator, a medical technician, a historian engaged in analyzing the economic, political, and social structure of this or that country. But less definite certainly was our knowledge of the qualifications for the job of script writer, base station operator, demolitions instructor, field representative, section leader. And hazier still were our notions of the typical operations of a paratrooper, resistance group leader, saboteur, undercover agent, liaison pilot, pigeonier.

One member of the staff, Dr. Lyman, had lived in China, and several had traveled extensively in prewar Europe, but none had worked in London during the blitz or had been under shellfire in Italy. Specific information about present conditions was lacking. What was the strength of the resistance groups in France? Was it necessary for an agent to look and speak like a native? What special problems confronted an operator in Yugoslavia or Greece? Was a tendency to alcoholism facilitated in Calcutta? How potent were the demoralizing effects of malaria in Burma? Were the Kachins difficult to work with? What were the living conditions in Kandy? Could we assume that most of the Chinese would be cooperative? No doubt the answers to some of these questions might have been found in books which none of us had time to read. But where could we have learned about the very special activities of OSS men in the field? Many of the operations were still in the planning phase; others were being carried out behind enemy lines outside the range of witnesses, and even at the most advanced bases the officer in charge was often for long periods uncertain as to what his men were doing out there in the unknown. It was sometimes months before enough knowledge was accumulated to form the basis of a report that could be hurried back through channels to the United States. Rarely were the details in any series of reports sufficient to give the officers in Washington vivid concrete pictures of the real circumstances in this or that OSS installation overseas. We realized, for example, that the performances of many men would vary according to the personalities of their associates, the temperaments of their immediate superiors. But such factors were unpredictable. The personnel had a way of changing from

month to month. At one time it would be rumored that a certain overseas branch was very badly managed: anyone who could not tolerate a good deal of snafu would become a nervous wreck in no time. A little later we would learn that things were moving very smoothly there under a new chief. And so it went.

Most of our information was obtained from the branch chiefs and their administrative officers in Washington. But much of what has just been said about us is also to some extent applicable to them. Few, if any, had ever operated in the field. Most of them had been drawn from civilian life and were doing their level best to learn a new game, the rules of which were changing from season to season, or even from week to week. To be sure, a few of the administrators had visited OSS headquarters in distant theaters, but the knowledge they acquired there was out of date a few months after they returned; and much of what they could remember they were too busy to impart or unable to communicate in terms that were usable by us. They did more than could reasonably have been expected of them, but it was nevertheless a long time before the assessment staff was able to piece together bits of information from various sources and arrive at adequate conceptions of the jobs that needed filling. The following excerpt is fairly typical of the form in which our information was received. We would class it neither among the least nor among the most helpful communications that were sent in from the theaters. It is about average.

The organization has been recruiting too many men, civilian or military, who have intelligence and sometimes the necessary mechanical training but who lack common sense, know nothing about working with men or how to look after the welfare and the morale of men under them. We simply must have men who can shoulder responsibility and use initiative with common sense. Simply because a man has intelligence does not qualify him for this type of work. In some instances we also have had men who fall into the class of the high-strung or emotional type. We simply cannot use men of that type in the field when they have to live with Chinese, eat Chinese food, and be under pressure at times. In most cases these men have suffered nervous breakdowns and other nervous ailments. Whether men are recruited in the States or here in the field they must be checked by a doctor and a psychiatrist before being pronounced fit for the field. The check by a psychiatrist is especially desirable. If for the Army and Navy there have been provisions made for psychiatric checks, then for us it is more important since our men spend from three to six months in the field without seeing American installations. We have had at least eight men, who for various quirks in their make-up, have had to be pulled from the field. Some of them could have been used at headquarters and should never have been sent to the field, and others simply wouldn't fit anywhere. One was definitely a psychiatric case.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It should be said that the breakdowns mentioned in this message occurred in men who had not been previously assessed.

Many of the projects were planned at theater headquarters, in London, Algiers, Cairo, Kandy, or Kunming, and it was there that the personnel requirements for each project were determined. The Washington office was merely informed that so many men of this and of that type were needed. It takes an expert to write a job description, and no experts in the theaters were free for such tedious employments. Consequently, in no instance was the information received in Washington as precise as it might have been. Furthermore, by the time the recruiting officers of the OSS Personnel Procurement Branch had engaged the interest of the required number of prospects, the specifications that had been sent by the administrative officer overseas were lost in the files of the corresponding officer in Washington. In any event, when a candidate arrived at the assessment station there was usually but one term (language expert, news analyst, team member, cartographer, or the like) on his Student Information Sheet to designate the nature of the assignment. It was months before these brief designations were successful in evoking in our minds images of definite duties that the candidate would be expected to perform.

In the beginning, the judgments of many of us were confused by the influence of an enduring lodger in our minds, the figure of the Sleuth, acquired from Somerset Maugham's *The British Agent*, from Helen MacInnes' *Assignment in Brittany*, from the thrillers of E. Phillips Oppenheim, and from who-can-say-what motion pictures and detective stories. Even the legendary cloak-and-dagger hero may have come into it. But that was natural enough. In those days our heads were empty billets waiting to be filled, and in the absence of the figures we had invited—images of operators in the field—a number of theatrical deceivers moved in and made themselves conspicuous. These intruders were driven out one by one and replaced by the proper personages eventually—(1) when the branch administrative officers finally received job specifications that were more precise; (2) when, many months later, some of the men who had served in the field returned to Washington and devoted hours of their time to answering our questions; (3) after several of the assessors had taken the course at one or another OSS school and learned most of the tricks that were taught agents; and (4) after a few other members of the staff had crossed the ocean and come home with firsthand observations.

**Heterogeneity of the Jobs Proposed for Members of Each Group of Candidates.**—Each British selection board was limited to the task of deciding suitability for *one type* of job, and so, at each station, a unified program could be set up with an interrelated variety of procedures to test the different functions that comprised a single role. These functions could be kept in mind by the assessors as they witnessed the performance of the candidates. In contrast to the British boards, the assessment stations in the

United States were expected to estimate suitability for a *great variety* of jobs. This expectation would not have been nearly so embarrassing if the members of each group that came to be examined had been recruited for jobs of the same general class: one group, say, composed of prospective administrators—branch chiefs, branch administrative officers, finance officers, supply officers, and so on; another group made up of prospective field operators: including parachutists, instructors and leaders of guerilla units, mortar experts, saboteurs; and a third consisting of propagandists: idea men, script writers, radio speakers, actors, artists, and the like. If this practice could have been instituted, it would have been possible to construct a number of different programs, each restricted to testing the qualities most necessary for a single class of jobs.

But homogeneity was out of the question. The candidates had to be taken pretty much as they arrived, regardless of the jobs proposed for them. They could not be kept waiting. It was always hard to find rooms for them in the city. No one was tolerant of delays. Either a candidate would be accepted, in which case the branch administrative officer was bent on having him start his course of training as soon as possible, or he would not be accepted, in which case he was usually anxious to return to the work that he had dropped abruptly on being summoned by OSS. As a result, a "class" of "students" at one of the assessment stations was apt to contain men selected for at least six or seven different kinds of jobs.

Since what we had available in the way of staff, facilities, and time did not permit the carrying out of six or seven different programs simultaneously, a more or less uniform schedule was established, parts of which were necessarily irrelevant to the question of the suitability of one or another class of recruits. Thus unavoidably a few of the hours of each man were wasted by us instead of being used gainfully by having him engage in activities that were pertinent to the duties he was slated to perform.

Also, the heterogeneity of the jobs to be considered eliminated the possibility of a unified orientation on the part of the assessors. Each focus of attention (candidate) called for a special frame of reference (job description—when we had it). For example, observing candidate Bud at meals, or during an interview or outdoor group test, one had to ask oneself: Will this man survive the rigorous training in Scotland? Will he get along with the British? Will he be able to govern his anxiety up there in the plane as the moment for the drop approaches on that fateful night? Will he favorably impress the members of the resistance group into whose territory he will jump? Is his French fluent? Will he make a good instructor? Will he play safe, or will he manifest initiative and daring in setting up road blocks and harassing the Germans generally? Will he find isolation in a lonely farmhouse tolerable when he hears that the Gestapo are searching for him in the neighborhood? Can he hold his liquor? At one of those

candidates was far greater than this, and it was our job to determine whether or not they would be equal to it.

#### **Heterogeneity of the Recruits: Strangeness (to Us) of Many of Them.**

—To fill the great diversity of positions mentioned earlier, individuals of a wide variety of backgrounds were recruited, and this made assessment difficult for American psychologists, most of whom were unfamiliar with the conventional assumptions, patterns of behavior, and modes of speech of Spaniards, Greeks, Albanians, Yugoslavs, Rumanians, Hungarians, Austrians, Germans, Poles, French, Hollanders, Chinese, and Koreans. There was not only the language impediment—many of these foreigners and first-generation Americans were embarrassed by their halting and stumbling use of English, and allowances had to be made in rating their written work—but there was our own uncertainty in trying to interpret properly some of their actions, gestures, and insinuations. Furthermore, it was not always easy for them—aliens in a group of hearty Americans—to adjust to the assessment situation, or easy for us to guess how they would act in other environments. Take that stubborn lantern-jawed fellow over there who is so irritating to his fellow candidates; is it not possible that he is the very man to appeal to a band of guerillas in the mountain passes of Albania? And observe that Frenchman gesturing so excitedly to that slightly scornful circle of Americans; how effective would his relations be with the lower, middle, and upper classes in his native country? It was hard to find solid ground for deciding questions like these.

Occasionally when we had a class composed entirely of Japanese, one or two cultural anthropologists, acquainted with the patterns of conduct prevalent among these Orientals, would help us by joining the staff for the duration of the testing period. But, for the most part, we had to feel our way through the complexities of cultural differences as best we could, blindly and without aid. Several of the errors we made can be attributed to our inclination to give foreigners the benefit of every doubt.

The difficulties of cross-cultural assessment become apparent when one listens closely to appraisals of his own countrymen by foreigners. For example, although numerous American groups were very successfully assessed by British boards, striking misinterpretations of the behavior of these men were not infrequent.

#### **Difference between Jobs Assigned Men in the Theater and Those for Which They Had Been Assessed.**—This difference was inevitable.

During the two, four, six, or even eight months that elapsed between the day that personnel for a certain project were requested in the theater and the day that the men arrived there, the situation in the area had usually changed considerably. Perhaps the original plan had been abandoned for one

reason or another, and new and more urgent undertakings were being launched. Incompetent men here and there had been released; illness had claimed others. Branch heads were clamoring for substitutes. As a result, a new arrival might very well be given a task for which he had been neither recruited, assessed, nor trained.

During most of their existence, Stations S and W were expected to judge the suitability of each recruit for a selected assignment, nothing more. Sometimes the writer of the evaluation note would state that the candidate was recommended for the designated job provided he would not be expected to perform this or that function, but the assessor would have been overstepping the bounds of his function if he had suggested an entirely different mission for which the candidate appeared to be better fitted. It is hard to account for the fact that this policy was maintained long after it was discovered that there was no certainty as to the job the candidate would be given in the theater. Anyhow, adjustability to a variety of assignments came to be regarded at the assessment stations as an asset that might very well be critical.

About three months before the war was won a new form of report sheet was belatedly adopted. This called for a fitness rating not only for the job selected for the recruit, but also for each of several other classes or types of jobs. The purpose here was, first, to give the branch chief in the theater some assistance in placing a man in a position other than that for which he had been chosen in the United States, and second, to give the staff the opportunity to record their impressions of each man's fitness or unfitness for other kinds of work, so that, whatever role was eventually assigned to him, there would be an assessment rating with which the final rating of performance in the field could be compared. However, since none of the men so rated had time to get into action before the cessation of hostilities, all of our follow-ups and our evaluations of assessment procedures were done on men whose suitability was rated for one job only, a job which not infrequently was different, as we have stated, from the one which became his eventually. Such considerations notwithstanding, in our calculations all failures in the field were counted as errors of assessment.

To summarize the chief factors so far discussed, it should be stated that (i) it was not possible—because of the nature of OSS activities—to obtain adequate job descriptions, the first requirement for an assessment program; (ii) it was not possible for any one staff at any one station to test suitability for such a great variety of novel assignments; and, even if it had been possible, (iii) the job that the candidate was assigned in the theater was in a large proportion of cases different from the one which had been selected for him in Washington.

This being the situation, it was decided at the start that we would judge



each candidate not primarily in relation to our conception, such as it was, of the designated mission, but in relation to a set of general qualifications (dispositions, qualities, abilities) which were applicable to the great majority of assignments of OSS personnel overseas. How this was done will be explained in the next chapter.

Now let us turn to some other conditions—further hindrances encountered in attempting to arrive at clear conceptions of the personalities and at valid estimates of the capacities of the candidates examined.

**Variations among Recruits in Temporary State of Health, Physical Training, Mood.**—Some men were in the pink of condition when they came to assessment, others were in the clutches of a severe cold, or depleted, or otherwise out of sorts. Some who had been confined to sedentary occupations for years, and had not recently engaged in physical exercise, appeared at a great disadvantage alongside young men fresh from basic training, or from officers' candidate school. Some recruits, who had spent a restless, wakeful night on the sleeper hurrying to the city where they were to report, were forced to whip their brains to keep them pulling for four hours during the first evening of written exercises. One candidate had just come from the bedside of a sick child; several were in the midst of divorce proceedings, some had suffered recent reverses in business. The wife of one candidate had shot herself in the abdomen accidentally and was undergoing a surgical operation at the very time her disquieted husband was doing his best to participate in the to-him-empty assessment situations.

These temporary factors, and their name is Legion, were so diverse, so subtle, and so varying in their effects that it was not possible to be certain what correction should be made for them. Thus we must list this uncontrollable variable among the conditions that increased the difficulties of assessment.

**Variations in the Amount of Previous Information Recruits Had Acquired Concerning Assessment Procedures.**—Some men were given no slanting information about the OSS and its activities by the officer who recruited them, and on arriving in Washington were sent to Station S or W without any explanation of what was afoot. They arrived at the assessment center in a state compounded of amusement, curiosity, mystification, confusion, defensiveness, and resentment, the proportion of these feelings varying with their temperaments and the type of treatment they had received along the way. The degree of error that is possible when a man first enters one of these hush-hush agencies is illustrated by the candidate who started the testing program under the impression that he was being considered for a position in the State Department. At the other extreme were those who, having worked for a year or more in the OSS in Washington,

had been able, from stories indiscreetly passed on to them by former "graduates" of assessment, to piece together fragmentary conceptions of the proceedings which served to prepare them for the shocks to come.

Although at the end of each testing period the recruits were enjoined not to tell anyone until the war was over what happened at S or at W, it was not easy for them to comply with this regulation. For most of those who went to Station S, the three days in the country was a novel, stimulating, and stressful experience, sometimes humiliating or annoying, but almost always memorable for one reason or another. They were full of it all when they returned to town and when they came together with other graduates this was an almost irresistible topic of conversation. Their reminiscences were occasionally overheard by men who were destined to go to one of these stations at some later date. In any event, the few men who arrived at S or at W with some preparation had an appreciable advantage over the innocent and unsuspecting raw recruits. Here again was an uncontrollable variable which undoubtedly influenced the emotional and intellectual set with which the candidates faced their tasks at the assessment center.

**Anonymity of Candidates.**—Since the administration had decided that it would be better for security reasons to keep the personal identity—name, family and vocational background, rank, and so on—of each recruit unknown to his fellows, it was arranged to have all the candidates leave their own clothes in town and come out to Station S dressed in Army fatigues, each with an invented pseudonym to distinguish him during the period of testing. Although this practice opened the way for some otherwise unworkable procedures and facilitated the creation of a convivial atmosphere, in other ways it augmented the difficulties of assessment.

In the first place, it deprived the staff of some of the cues that are commonly utilized in judging character—the material, cut, and condition of a man's clothing, the color-pattern of his tie, the folds and creases of his hat and the angle at which he wears it, how he carries his handkerchief, with or without a monogram, and so forth. In those instances in which the candidate wore his own socks and shoes, these, as sole indicators of taste and social status, received an unusual amount of attention.

The advantage of being able to observe the candidates in the garb of the Common Man, dispossessed of all symbols of authority and station, was further offset by the fact that under these conditions some men act in a manner that differs from their manner in real life. Take the buoyant, successful journalist, for example, who, caught in the draft at the age of thirty-four years, had been somewhat shamefacedly wearing the stripes of a T/S. At the assessment station, this man, rid of the uniform that suppressed his personality, came into his own again. The somewhat tense young man of

twenty-eight, on the other hand, who had enlisted before Pearl Harbor and risen rapidly to the rank of major, lost, when stripped of his leaves, some of the support upon which his mounting confidence had been relying. As a result, the older and more sophisticated writer conveyed an impression of greater self-assurance at assessment than did the young officer. But transplanted back within the framework of the Army hierarchy, it was not unlikely that the journalist, deprived of certain privileges, or pushed around, would find alcohol an inviting refuge from a humiliating position; whereas the young major, heartened by evidences of respect, might very well outdo himself in striving to live up to his official role.

Thus the wearing of fatigues at the assessment stations served to conceal if not to obliterate the often powerful effects of rank differences. As a result, predictions of the subsequent effectiveness of enlisted men were apt to be too high; those of field grade officers, too low. (Another factor tending in the same direction was the operation among our staff members of sentiments favorable to the less appreciated man, the underdog.)

**Length of Time That Elapsed before Securing Evaluation of Assessment Ratings.**—After being passed at one of the assessment stations in the United States, a man would usually spend from one to three months in attending OSS schools and awaiting transportation out of the country. It might be two months more before he was well started on a definite assignment overseas. And then not until another month or two had passed would his superior officers and associates feel that they had enough evidence on which to rest a judgment of his efficiency. Thus one had to wait anywhere from four to eight months to evaluate an assessment rating; and to do it even as quickly as this it was necessary for a member of the assessment staff to go overseas himself and collect appraisals in the theater. By the time he had returned to Washington and written up his report, six to ten months had elapsed. The first evaluation reports on 137 cases appraised in the ETIO were finished in late October, 1944, ten months after Station S was started. Thus, for this long period the assessors had to proceed without knowing what proportion of their shots was missing the target. Furthermore, the early reports from overseas did not include the information that was required to appraise the efficacy of the different procedures. And no one on the staff was free to make the necessary statistical correlations, to determine the degrees of conformity that existed between the S or W ratings on each variable on each test and the ratings given in the theater. Validating correlations of this sort constitute the best ground for deciding which tests should be retained without modification, which revised, and which eliminated. The OSS psychologists and psychiatrists, fully occupied with the routine of assessment, were unable to obtain these figures until after the war was over.

This will suffice as a list of the chief complications which confronted the OSS assessment staff. The description of these conditions has served, we hope, to define the nature of our task as distinguished from that of the average selection board. Two other important differences deserve brief mention.

**High Quality of the Majority of OSS Candidates.**—The OSS board had to appraise the relative usefulness of men and women who fell, for the most part, in the middle and upper ranges of the distribution curve of general effectiveness or of one or more special abilities; people who had already been selected because of demonstrated skill in some field of activity. OSS standards, in other words, were somewhat higher than those of the majority of institutions which make use of screening devices. Consequently, some of the tests which are successful in distinguishing people who, because of some defect or handicap, are incapable of functioning effectively, were not suitable for our program.

**Necessity of Judging Social Relations.**—As was mentioned above, the OSS psychologists and psychiatrists were expected to estimate a candidate's ability to cooperate and to get along well with others, and also, in the majority of cases, his ability to lead, to organize the activities of others, and to evoke respect. Since there are no standardized procedures for measuring these qualities and abilities, new methods had to be improvised.

The difficulties listed above, by challenging the imagination, acted as stimulants to the members of the staff rather than as depressants; furthermore, they were balanced by certain rather *unusual advantages* which greatly facilitated the process of assessment.

**Excellent Locations for Assessment.**—Except for its roominess there was nothing noteworthy about the drab brownstone building in Washington, D. C., in which the W staff carried on its operations; but the country house and farm in Fairfax County, Virginia, where Station S was located, and the beach club facing the Pacific, which was known as Station WS, were both peculiarly suited to the requirements of a comprehensive assessment program. Sleeping, messing, and recreation facilities were adequate for candidates and staff at both places. There were small rooms for interviews and large rooms for the administration of group procedures; and, outdoors, particularly at S, the terrain had plenty of features which lent themselves to the construction of tasks to test physical and mechanical competence, cooperativeness, and leadership.

Although it might have been better to select or prepare locations which would strain the candidates' tolerance of ugliness, dirt, disorder, and dis-

comfort, the beauty of the landscape and the agreeableness of the architecture at S and at WS were sources of great satisfaction to the staff members who worked at one or the other station month after month. Furthermore, the candidates' delight in finding on arrival that they were to live amid such attractive surroundings was an important determinant of their enjoyment of the three-and-a-half day period; it lifted their morale and increased their capacity to endure the ordeals and humiliations which they experienced along the way. Thus periodically stressful tasks were imbedded in a satisfying setting, the result being that, in the end, the overall impression of the majority of assesses was pleasant rather than unpleasant. We were assured that several other factors—the friendly atmosphere, the informality and zest of the staff members, the novelty of the test situations, the orderly manner in which the program was administered—entered into the creation of the candidates' largely favorable judgment, a judgment which in numerous cases was generalized to include the entire organization. For instance, several S "graduates" informed us that the assessment program engendered the belief that, since the OSS took such pains in the selection of its personnel, it must be a pretty fine outfit. Anyhow, in many cases, the process of assessment served as a morale-raising force, and the point that we are stressing here is that one of the components of this force was the agreeable environment in which the program was carried out.

**Moderate Flow of Candidates.**—Although the assessment staffs operated under full steam most of the time—not often did the work at Station S end before midnight—the pressure was due to the fullness of the schedule rather than to the number of candidates that had to be assessed. It would have been simple enough, by omitting a few procedures, to make time for the examination of more candidates—or, possibly, for a spot or two of leisure. But none of the staffs saw fit to do this.

In the beginning (January, 1944), Station S assessed candidates at the rate of 120 per month, but before the winter was over this number had risen to almost 250, which was judged to be too heavy a load for the system that had been adopted. Another assessment unit, Station W, with a one-day schedule of procedures, was therefore set up in Washington. This change decreased the flow at S and so permitted a slight reorganization of the program, which lengthened the testing period by half a day and allowed for a short period of relaxation between the departure of one group and the arrival of another. This new schedule provided for the screening of 6 groups ("classes") of about 18 men each (a total of 108 candidates) per month. Station W assessed candidates at the rate of about 200 a month. In June, 1944, Station WS on the Pacific coast was opened. These three units—S, W, and WS—were able to handle all the personnel recruited for OSS during the height of its procurement season. When six months later the flow of candidates in

the West decreased, WS was closed. For the remaining eight months all the screening in America was done at S and at W.

All told, 5,391 persons were assessed in the United States between December, 1943, and August, 1945. If there had been twice this number of recruits it would have been necessary either to organize more assessment units or to abandon the three-day program.

**Adequate Staff.**—Those who shared the responsibility of setting up the assessment program were exceedingly fortunate, first, in being unrestricted by the administrators of OSS in respect to the number of men and women who might be recruited for the various staffs, and second, in being able to find enough trained psychologists and psychiatrists to carry out and develop the program in accordance with the methodological principles that were implicit in the original conception. These principles will be discussed in the next chapter.

Not until Station S reached the terminal phase of its career, however, did its staff find one man of the sort it had wanted since the beginning: a man who had served overseas, who was not a psychologist or a psychiatrist, who was able to size men up impartially, and who was eager to join the staff as an additional observer.

In summary, then, it might be said that the task which was undertaken by the OSS psychologists and psychiatrists was that of evaluating the general usefulness of about 300 men and women a month, very diverse in respect to age, cultural background, and talents, and judging the fitness of each for a particular assignment, the nature of which was but vaguely designated. In their attempt to accomplish this task they were supported by General Donovan and other members of the administration in every conceivable way. They were given excellent locations and facilities, a free hand in recruiting new staff members, and, from first to last, ample encouragement and cooperation.

### Chapter III

## ASSESSMENT AT S: PROCEDURES

The present chapter describes the program at Station S during the last phase of its career, at which time, we should like to think, S was at its highest level of effectiveness, although there is certainly no member of the staff who would not claim that at least one test which had been used earlier fulfilled its purpose better than the procedure which replaced it. Had assessment continued for another six months the picture to be presented here would undoubtedly have been different in certain respects, though it is unlikely that its basic structure would have been radically altered, for the latter had remained unchanged since the summer of 1944. No account of a single session of S can do full justice to its ever changing program, to the variety of constellations of tests and procedures which characterized its history, or to the interesting theoretical and practical considerations which led to each of the changes. To ignore these aspects of the program is to lose much of its unique quality. It can only be hoped that other sections of this book will succeed in conveying to the reader something of the ferment and onward surge of S.

In the present account, the procedures of the program will be presented in the order in which they were experienced by the candidates, thus in effect taking the reader, as the candidates were taken, through all steps of assessment. But whereas the success of the assessment program required that the purposes of the various tests and the meanings of the situations should be hidden from the candidates, the exposition of the program requires that the reader be taken behind the scenes and into the staff room where he may become acquainted with the aim and rationale of each procedure. In other words, the reader will have an opportunity to view each part of the program, first, as it was experienced by the candidates, and second, as it was conceived and utilized by the staff.

### RECRUITMENT OF CANDIDATES

It was not the function of S or of any of the assessment units to recruit OSS personnel, but merely to assess them as persons and as candidates

for the particular OSS overseas assignments for which they had been recruited through one of three channels.

Within the organization a Personnel Procurement Branch (PPB) was charged with the responsibility of recruiting personnel from the various armed services. It was the practice of the other branches of the organization to supply PPB with their own job descriptions and to requisition through it the number of "bodies" which would be required to fill these assignments. With these job descriptions in hand and with authority granted by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to recruit military personnel, recruiting officers of the OSS visited various Army camps and naval stations to interview likely candidates.

The secrecy of OSS operations and the restrictions placed by considerations of security upon what recruiters might say when interviewing men lessened considerably the precision of their descriptions of the jobs for which they sought volunteers. Consequently many men had only the haziest idea of the kind of organization they were joining or the kind of work for which they were volunteering when they expressed a willingness to be assigned to OSS. Thus though the very purpose of PPB was to select men best suited for OSS assignments, the restrictions placed upon its officers inevitably introduced into their recruitment a selective factor of special appeal to a particular type of person. Indeed, there is reason to believe that this method of recruiting brought to the OSS as volunteers a disproportionately large number of men attracted by the mystery of secret missions and by the adventure of what appeared to be unusually hazardous duty, and there is good reason to doubt that this type of person was always best suited for the kind of work for which he volunteered. Of course, among the men who did volunteer for service, a request for transfer to OSS was made only for those who, in the recruiter's judgment, were especially qualified.

It is clear that every recruiting officer had a picture of the requirements for successful performance in the various jobs, but unfortunately it is not so clear that the pictures were identical with each other or with those in the minds of the members of the assessment staff. Indeed, so convinced did we become of their discrepancy that steps were taken to bring them together by arranging that recruiting officers go through the one-day assessment at W as students and then visit S as observers.

Whatever the agreement or disagreement between the concepts of job fitness held by procurement officers and by the assessment staff, recruiting constituted a first rough screening through which volunteers for OSS had to pass. There was no guarantee, however, that those whom the recruiters were willing to let through the screen would ever reach OSS. Requests for their transfer were made through channels, but channels sometimes became blocked. Anyway, for a variety of reasons only a portion of the military personnel requested was ever transferred to OSS.

The second channel through which individuals came to OSS, and eventually to assessment (provided they were slated for overseas assignment), was the Civilian Personnel Branch. This branch recruited, for the most part, though not entirely, civilian men and women, for secretarial and stenographic positions in the various branches of the organization and consequently the majority of its recruits were women. Many persons who knew of the existence of OSS sought employment in it through this channel, but they were by no means numerous enough to meet the large need for civilian personnel. For this reason the branch employed the usual and recognized techniques for attracting applicants for the positions which it had to fill—vaguely worded newspaper and magazine advertising, and so on.

The various branches at all times did a certain amount of their own recruiting. This was the third channel of entry into OSS. Persons already within the organization and aware of its needs for personnel understandably enough often recommended friends, acquaintances, and sometimes relatives for positions known to be vacant. This sort of individual recruitment can be very effective provided the sponsor is a good judge of others, primarily interested in the welfare of the organization, and impersonal in the recommendations, which he makes, but it is also subject to various forms of abuse, only one of which is nepotism. One of the important contributions, not to be overlooked, which an assessment staff can make to any large organization is the check which it places upon such abuses, unwittingly since it knows the names and family connections of none of the candidates whom it assesses. In OSS, however, this check was placed only upon those who were being considered for assignment overseas; assessment units were not asked, except in rare cases, to pass upon the fitness of candidates for jobs in Washington or within the continental limits of the United States.

Regardless of the channel through which a new recruit came to OSS, he was told little about the nature of the organization he was joining or of the specific assignment for which he was being considered. This was especially true in the case of candidates for overseas assignments, who, if not recommended by the assessment staff for their projected billets, were seldom retained in the organization. If military personnel, they were usually transferred back to the unit from which they had been recruited; if civilians, they were simply not employed, but in neither case were they told that their failure to be retained in OSS had anything to do with their performance in assessment. It was important that persons who might not be retained in OSS should not know too much about the organization. For this reason candidates came to Washington with little idea of what they were getting into, and by the time they had been briefed for their sojourn at S they knew little more.

Men who had been interviewed at military installations, who had volunteered for the kind of work so sketchily outlined to them, who had passed

the recruiting officer's screening, and whose transfer to OSS, requested by PPB, had been granted by the proper authorities, received, though sometimes not until weeks or even months after the recruiting interview, orders to report to Washington. These, following their arrival, were kept in holding areas or given leave until such time as they could be sent to assessment school. This meant a further delay of usually not more than a day or two, but seldom more than a week. This whole period of waiting on the part of men eager for a new assignment was not unimportant in creating some of the tension which candidates frequently showed upon arrival at the assessment area.

Civilians who had expressed interest in an overseas assignment with OSS were asked if they would be willing to come to Washington for a few days, and in most cases were told frankly that they would spend this time at an assessment school where an attempt would be made to determine where they could best be fitted into the organization. If they agreed to this they were entered in an assessment class and asked to report in Washington either on the day they would go to the assessment station or, in some cases, on the preceding day.

Whether he knew it or not, and regardless of whether he had been recruited from one of the armed services or from civilian life, every person slated for an assignment with OSS was checked thoroughly by the Security Branch of the organization. In many cases the security check of candidates had been completed before they entered assessment as students.

#### BRIEFING CANDIDATES FOR S

After his arrival in Washington and prior to being sent to S, each candidate was interviewed by a representative of the branch for which he had been recruited. This was usually the officer who would supervise the candidate throughout his training in the OSS schools, provided he received a recommendation from the assessment board. This interview, at least upon occasion, served as a second screening of candidates, for there were instances in which an administrative officer was so certain that a candidate was not up to the work for which he had been recruited that he canceled his registration in the S class and requested his transfer out of OSS at once.

Practice varied widely among the branches as to what was told candidates about their projected assignments and in any one branch the amount of information given candidates was far from constant. It was sometimes our impression that there was a high correlation between what a candidate knew about his projected assignment and the impression which he had made upon the branch administrative officer at the time of his interview. Information possessed by students had varied from detailed knowledge of the specific jobs for which they were slated to no knowledge at all about their proposed

rated high (4 or 5) overseas both on Motivation and on Job Performance. The data for forming a contrasting group are insufficient; none of the men was low in both Motivation and Job Performance, and the reports on the 13 average cases are for the most part incomplete or inconsistent.

Two of the 7 successful men present cases of strong social motivation based on a firm ideological foundation; both had given the necessity to "have the job done" as their main motive, and both related this necessity to patriotism and to the fight against antidemocratic forces. One of the two, in carrying out his specialized technical job, earned general recognition by his conscientious work, his eagerness to help others, and his general friendliness and good nature. The other, a person of expansive temperament, great drive, and idealistic enthusiasms, distinguished himself on dangerous intelligence missions, maintaining high morale over long periods spent under unusually difficult and stressful conditions. A third man, another good leader, described as highly energetic, direct, responsible, and respected by all, had given the desire to do novel and interesting work as his main reason for wanting the assignment, but this was supplemented by the socially oriented motive of participation. No ideological foundation was present in this case, but the strong social orientation reflected in all reports on this man is a characteristic he shares with the first two subjects.

The fourth man presents an exemplary case of sound and sustained motivation based primarily, if not solely, on a rational sense of duty developed in a well-integrated, self-confident personality. A successful technical administrator, this man was drafted for a specialized job. At S he had described his attitude as follows: "I knew that my background was useful and I did not see how I could *not* do it. I'm glad to be doing it. I have felt for some time that I ought to be doing something." There was nothing spectacular about the quality of this man's motivation: because of his unwillingness to leave his business for an indefinite period of time, he even stipulated in advance the duration of his assignment. Yet this limited motivation proved adequate to ensure a steady and generally effective performance. Though a high-class specialist, he willingly did menial jobs when necessary, and his work was praised as painstaking, conscientious, and thorough. He was discreet, tactful, and uniformly friendly in relations with his associates and easily gained their confidence and respect.

The next case requires more interpretation. It is the case of an Army man who during assessment gave as his main motive in volunteering for an operational assignment his conviction that he possessed the requisite skills. Neither this motive, nor the desire for adventure which he professed in addition, seemed to stem from a feeling of self-confidence; the candidate voiced, on the contrary, a number of misgivings about his health, strength, and ability to do the job, commenting that he would not volunteer for any particularly hazardous duty within his assignment, but would not refuse if

his superiors felt he could do it. His Emotional Stability was rated as Low Average in assessment. This picture suggests an insecure person whose desire for adventure may have been closely related to a desire to test and prove himself, or to maintain threatened self-respect, attitudes which do not hold much promise of success in an operational assignment. Actually, the candidate never got into the field; while waiting, along with others, for his job to materialize, he volunteered for work as a supply officer. This job he did so conscientiously that he was held up as an example of responsibility personified and won the general approbation of his colleagues, despite the fact that he was not particularly popular as a social creature. This case demonstrates how even motivation stemming largely from insecurity can prove highly effective in certain kinds of situations, especially in situations which are less challenging than those which the person has set himself to meet.

The remaining two cases are those of successful field leaders, both of them described as "authentic heroes," distinguished for bravery. While social motives were not missing from their lists of reasons for wanting an assignment, they were outnumbered by egocentric motives, most, but not all of them, of an expansive, self-confident variety. Although both men were well liked and highly valued as leaders, each presented some problems. One was described as emotionally immature, lacking serious purpose in life. The other was said to be unreliable and uneven in his work, to have no tolerance for routine, and to want recognition first and foremost. He was considered by some of his supervisors as a "problem child" whose ability made him well worth the effort required to manage him successfully. These two cases illustrate admirably both the positive potentialities and the limitations of a predominantly egocentric motivation.

Thus out of seven cases of high motivation that resulted in effective performance, three men showed a strong social orientation, with or without underlying ideology; two were motivated by the sense of duty, or related concerns; and two by predominantly egocentric motives aiming at activity, adventure, and prestige. In most cases, while one motive, or one cluster of motives, seemed to predominate, it was combined with one or more motives of a different nature. Thus even the proponent of militant democracy, who voiced strongly almost all of the social motives listed, was also motivated by the desire to have wide scope for individual ability and action; and the two men oriented to prestige and adventure also mentioned motives like duty and patriotism. This is consistent with the hypothesis that might be tentatively formulated on the basis of our findings: reliable and effective motivation may be the function less of any one particular strong drive than of some pattern of predominantly positive motives well integrated in the personality. The few cases reported here can do no more than exemplify roughly some of these configurations and demonstrate that various patterns

the presence of the Otis, which is correlated more highly with the members of the preceding cluster. The Otis is a test of the catch-all sort which is likely to appear in several clusters. The correlations of Mechanical Comprehension with the Nonverbal Battery is .37 and with the Otis .49.

**Determination of the Final Rating.**—In view of the fact that in 24 per cent of the cases the final rating was not the same as the simple average of all the ratings but was one grade below or above the average, we might examine the data to discover, if possible, some of the factors which determined the shift. One determinant, we would suppose, was the greater validity, in our minds, of some tests as compared to others. By calculating for each test the percentage of ratings which agreed with the final rating, we obtained one measure, not free from ambiguity, of this determinant. The figures show that the interviewer's rating (64 per cent agreement) was the most influential. Next in order were the verbal-social tests, Discussion and Debate (average 54 per cent), followed by the practical outdoor tests (average 51 per cent), the paper-and-pencil tests (average 47 per cent), and Judgment of Others (36 per cent).

Among the other more important factors leading to a final grade that was different from the simple average was the anticipated recommendation. When the staff's decision for a candidate was to be Highly Recommended, the final rating, if changed at all, was likely to be raised; whereas if the decision was to be Not Recommended, the final rating, if changed, was likely to be lowered.

The influence of the interviewer calls for special consideration. Our figures show that when, during the first months of the program, the final grade deviated from the average, the interviewer's grade, in the majority of cases, also deviated from the average and nearly always in the same direction. We conclude from this that it was the interviewer's judgment which determined the shift in most of these instances. In later months his influence was less apparent. It was also found that whenever there was a difference between his rating and the final grade, the former was much more likely to be the higher of the two, which, as we have said earlier, indicates, if we assume that the final rating was our most valid figure, that there was a consistent tendency for each interviewer to overrate the men he interviewed.

But of more significance than this determinant of the final rating of Effective Intelligence, as well as of all other variables, was the frame of reference, or the standard held in mind while making ratings. This is an important problem because if one's frame of reference shifts there will be a corresponding shift in scale values and, therefore, in the distribution of the ratings.

The crucial question is: were we able to maintain unchanged the scale

against which we rated the candidates throughout the program at S? Was our frame of reference—the standard we used in rating our candidates—the same in the last period as it was in the first? Here we have one finding which may be pertinent: when the final rating was different from the average rating, the former was much more often *higher* in the first few months of S, and much more often *lower* in the last few months. What is the explanation? Why were we disposed to boost a candidate in the early days and to bring him down toward the end?

Looking back in retrospect upon the men we assessed, those of us who were at S throughout its entire history find ourselves in agreement on the following point: in the early days of S we were tremendously impressed by the quality of the candidates. Certainly there were exceptions, but by and large they seemed to us an uncommonly superior lot. Previously, most of our clinical experience had been with the ordinary run of people, and having derived our standard of the "average man" from them, we were prepared to feel that the OSS candidates were far above this standard. This is what happened, one can understand why in the early days, when we did something other than accept a simple average of all ratings as the final grade on Effective Intelligence, we moved the rating up rather than down. As we viewed our candidates in the first period at S within the frame of reference of the population we had tested in former days, they looked extremely capable, more capable, we would now guess, than they actually were. If there is any truth in this notion, then it is likely that our early experiences at S with superior candidates (at least superior in relation to our previous standard) gave us a new frame of reference in terms of which we rated subsequent candidates. If, as seems likely, during the last month of S the candidates were observed in relation to the first graduates, the must have suffered by this comparison, the earlier men having by the grown into legendary figures of great prowess.

There is thus reason to believe that the scale for rating candidates change with time and circumstance. Without a constant anchor, a steady frame of reference, we probably rated candidates too high in the earlier and too low in the later periods. Does this mean that ratings will always be incomparable At first to some extent, yes. But in so far as this effect can be recognized corrections can be made for it. Only research into techniques of rating will reveal the ways in which this source of error can be reduced.

#### EMOTIONAL STABILITY

From first to last, the problem of emotional stability was a central issue in assessment, a vastly important consideration in predicting a candidate's overall effectiveness in the field. It was the variable of personality most subject to change, and if changed for the worse it could vitiate all the other



skills of a candidate. A man with an outstanding knowledge of labor organization in Europe could become valueless to the OSS if his emotional reactions to conditions of living overseas should be such as to interfere seriously with his operating efficiency. Similarly, a man who "went to pieces" while on an operational mission might prevent the success of the project and at the same time jeopardize the lives of his associates. It was not enough to know that a man's motivation was high and his skills were adequate; we had also in the light of our assessment of his emotional stability to estimate what his operating efficiency would be when called upon to work under conditions of frustration and of danger to life and limb.

Coupled with the focal importance of emotional stability in assessment was the necessity of having to evaluate this variable on something less than completely adequate objective test data. In a few cases there was sufficient evidence in a man's history to preclude his being sent overseas, but for a man finally recommended there were never enough objective data to ensure that his emotional stability would remain unimpaired in the face of unpredictable stresses. Given enough time, there was no reason why an adequate staff of psychiatrists and psychologists could not discover the emotional structure which underlay a man's manifest behavior, but in many cases the three-day period of assessment provided little more than a rough understanding of the role and intensity of a man's affective life. The insightful candidate could provide us with highly important data to help round out our estimate of his emotional stability, but many of the candidates had little more than a banal and stereotyped conception of their own emotional dynamics. It was not enough, however, to grasp, as best we could, the emotional make-up of our candidates; we had to predict their probable performance in specific field assignments. This step never failed to challenge us, and though it was a judgment made on the best evidence available, it was never made with complete confidence as to its accuracy. A difficult task in the assessment of emotional stability was that of estimating the overall temperamental sturdiness of a man as contrasted with his capacity for adaptation to specific conditions. If a candidate presented a history characterized by resilient and stable adjustment to the major problems of his life, and if the behavior which he manifested at S was consistent with this picture, there was little reason to expect that his adjustment to conditions overseas would be other than sound, especially if his motivation was high. Few candidates, however, presented such a uniform picture, and to send overseas only such sturdy individuals would have limited too severely the number of personnel available for the various OSS missions. Hence the question of specificity of adjustability entered into our considerations. Would the candidate with certain emotional strengths and weaknesses be able to adapt to the particular conditions of a particular job? One immediate difficulty into which we ran in attempting

to answer this question was, of course, the somewhat vague knowledge which we possessed of the specific stresses characteristic of the different assignments. Only in the most general terms did we know what a given recruit might encounter. Our realization in the latter part of the program that many candidates would be called upon to carry out assignments other than the ones for which they had been selected and for which we had assessed them served only to complicate our problem.

Essentially our task was to predict the emotional stability of candidates in environments which had little similarity to any of those they had previously known. Prior to the war, few Americans had ever lived completely isolated from their families, among natives who in their behavior expressed some friendliness but often open hostility, cut off from contacts with individuals of the opposite sex of their own age and culture, with marked limitations in food and housing, out of touch with many familiar American recreations and diversions, and under the constant stresses of danger to life and limb. These were the conditions of war, and each man, in his own way, had to adjust to them. Under these circumstances many familiar patterns of adjustment would prove inadequate; many customary modes of living would be impossible. New satisfactions and securities would have to be established.

Accordingly, the genuine satisfactions which a candidate might find in his projected assignment became an important consideration in assessing his emotional stability. The quality and intensity of his motivation provided a preview of what he was seeking, but many times the motivation, as expressed by a candidate, had all of the distortions of untrained subjective analysis. At best the satisfactions which might be achieved in the field would almost certainly be different from those anticipated by a candidate while undergoing assessment. When, however, the expressed motivation was clearly unrealistic there could be little hope that the candidate's emotional stability would be equal to his inevitable disappointments and frustrations.

Few if any of the candidates had a clear and concrete idea of what conditions in the field would be like and little conception of the months of training, the monotonous activity, and the days of waiting which lay ahead of them before their important work would begin. Unless they had had years of Army experience they could easily underestimate the inertia and the irritations they would experience. Once they were in the field, however, there would be experiences and satisfactions which could redeem the months of preparation. How much satisfaction would the candidate be able to derive from submerging himself in a cooperative activity as a member of a group? If he had a unique skill to contribute, what value would it have for him to improve that skill and to use it to best advantage for the aims of his mission? What would be the meaning for him of the close friendships which might be possible in the isolation of working behind enemy lines?



What satisfaction would it bring him to vindicate his self-reliance and his ingenuity in the face of ever-changing obstacles and hazards? These questions, which we tried to answer, suggest some of the possible satisfactions in OSS assignments overseas, and if a candidate could not avail himself of them, there were serious doubts about his continuing emotional stability. If a man's motivation and affective needs could not be satisfied by the vicissitudes in the field, there was reason to consider him a bad risk for overseas work.

Though emotional factors influence the operation of all personality variables, Emotional Stability seemed to us to be most closely related to Motivation and to Social Relations. We conceptualized these as separate variables, but dynamically none of them could ever be considered alone. Motivation a function of underlying emotional attitudes and needs, and, without stability in the underlying structure, motivation, no matter how high it may be in the moment, will not be of sound quality or of an enduring nature. Conversely, if a man's motivation is sound and realistic, there is reason to believe that his emotional dynamics are relatively stable.

Good social relations, likewise, play a supportive role in the maintenance of high emotional stability. Few if any individuals can live with even minimum contentment without having a degree of acceptance by others. Lack of this approval is often an important direct cause for neurotic disturbances. And in the field situation, with its numerous privations, acceptance by one's fellows becomes highly prized and indeed essential. When a man has little skill in social relations there is an additional burden placed upon his emotional life. Conversely, if he can avail himself of group support, he has good insurance against other possible assaults represented by a stressful environment. Good social relations and the satisfaction they make possible can compensate for other unfulfilled needs. Indeed, an individual's social relations and his emotional stability are so intimately connected that we have elsewhere raised the question as to whether they are not to be looked upon as two aspects of a more fundamental trait. (See Factor A, Table 4, page 513.) Even when emotional stability was the focus of our concern, it was clear that it could never be properly evaluated without discovering how it was related to social relations and to motivation.

The term "emotional stability" has connotations that may cause the reader to obtain a misleading impression of what it was we sought to conceptualize and rate under this heading. The discussion of the problems which confronted us in our attempts to rate the variable may have served to clarify the meaning we gave to Emotional Stability, but even so a further elaboration of the concept may be helpful and perhaps even necessary. Unfortunately the term suggests something stable and static, placid and even. As a phrase it may, to some, even connote the absence of emotion. Yet it was farthest from our thought that absence of emotion or even emotional

flattening is a sound and valuable trait of personality. Almost every situation demands of the normal and healthy person some measure of emotional response, and there are many situations, especially in time of war, which require violent emotional reaction. A high rating on Emotional Stability did not mean, then, the absence of emotion but primarily an appropriateness of emotion in both a qualitative and a quantitative sense. Emotion is dynamic, and, if integrated with action and directed toward appropriate objects, is helpful. It was, then, the integration and direction of emotion by the person which loomed large in our notion of Emotional Stability. There are a number of desirable emotions: for example, enthusiasm, affection for associates, hate of the enemy, and, in some cases, fear, if it leads to prompt coordinated action, all of which might stand a candidate in good stead in his assignment overseas. We looked for these in a man, and if he had them, so much the better. We did not rule them out of our conception of Emotional Stability, but it must be admitted that our focus in this variable was upon a man's ability to manage emotions which might otherwise disrupt his behavior. It is probably fair to say that the core of Emotional Stability as we conceived it was a man's *governance of undesirable emotions*. We looked for emotions that were not directed toward or integrated with actions that would further the success of a man's assignment and so caused conflict which would be incapacitating (e.g., anxiety, phobias), or, if objectified in behavior, would lead to undesirable results (e.g., flight from the enemy, anger against associates, dereliction of duty). Signs of such emotion beyond the control of the subject we took as evidence of emotional instability and accordingly rated the subject low.

Concerning a man's emotional stability there were two questions to be asked: (1) Do undesirable emotions occur frequently and intensely? (2) If such emotions do occur, can they be held in check or canalized in desirable directions? If our answer to the second question was positive, then our rating of Emotional Stability would be raised, but an affirmative answer could be given only for those cases in which there was evidence, usually from the Interview, of superior dynamic structuration (e.g., regnant organization, ego strength) of the personality.

Ultimately, then, our rating of Emotional Stability was an estimate of the extent to which a man's performance in the field would be affected by emotional factors for better or for worse. If a candidate had optimum Emotional Stability, his energies and abilities could be devoted completely to the task at hand without concern on his part as to how he was doing or what others might think of him. He could consider the situation confronting him for what it actually was and would not be distracted by hardships, or frustrations, or the personalities of those around him. Though no one probably ever possessed this degree of imperturbability, it represents the broad conception which guided our final rating of this variable. Our

conception might be called an efficiency rating of emotional maturity for the successes of field work. Within this broad definition was included a man's potentiality for a neuropsychiatric breakdown. No other development could so completely make a man valueless to the organization and indeed a distinct liability to the immediate group in which he worked. In the sense that every man has his breaking point the whole range of our rating scale represented this prediction. But in practice only the lowest third of the scale implied the possibility of a crippling breakdown. For the remainder of the scale the emphasis was on varying degrees of emotional efficiency in the job overseas.

Another consideration which entered into our rating of Emotional Stability—though partly subsumed under the rating of Social Relations—was the effect which a man's affective reactions might have on group morale and the stability of others. One familiar technique for ridding oneself of anxiety, if only temporarily, is that of turning it out in irritability, complaining, and hostility directed toward others. This capacity to "turn outward" his anxiety might in some cases be the crucial factor in an individual's maintaining a moderately good working efficiency. If, however, the extent of a candidate's impairment of group efficiency seemed likely to outweigh his contribution which, in other ways, he might conceivably make, it seemed wise not to recommend him for an overseas assignment. The fact that poor social relations of this type are so clearly the result of emotional instability explains why this pattern of adjustment was considered in our rating of Emotional Stability.

A final concern in scoring a candidate's Emotional Stability was the possible presence of psychopathic traits. This factor might seem to match only roughly our concept of Emotional Stability since the psychopath, in the nature of his overall adjustment, might be stable, in the sense that he would not develop symptoms under the most difficult conditions. And, if his motivation were high, he might be able for a while to perform efficiently. But all things considered, psychopaths could hardly be considered assets to the organization. Their irresponsibility and antisocial tendencies would quickly make them a liability to the group. In most cases they could not be depended upon to make a solid contribution, and they might even jeopardize the lives of others. After all it is the psychopath, par excellence, who lacks governance of emotion and impulse, and this was crucial to our concept of Emotional Stability. When such a deviation in character as psychopathy was uncovered during assessment, the candidate who possessed this particular lack of fitness was rated inferior in Emotional Stability.

During the assessment period there were three major sources of data regarding a candidate's Emotional Stability: the Interview, the situations, and casual observations. The Interview brought together a candidate's projective material, his various inventories, and his personal history form,

since all of these were considered concurrently with and interpreted in the light of his life history data and the impressions gained of him during the Interview. The situations which were relevant for the estimation of Emotional Stability were Construction, Stress, and Post-Stress. A supplementary but very important source of data was the incidental observation of candidates in the other situations and in the informal social life at S. By all odds, the opinion of the interviewer concerning a man's emotional stability carried the greatest weight in our deliberations. But each of the three sources of data contributed in a complementary fashion to the judgment represented by our final report and final rating.

The Interview provided the widest range of data both as to developmental history and as to the various levels of affective attitude. It supplied the frame of reference within which a candidate's responses to stressful situations and his informal behavior during assessment were to be understood. Our conception of the dynamic structure of a candidate's personality, as well as our final judgment of his stability, was derived in large measure from the evidence gathered by the interviewer. As compared with the other personality variables, Emotional Stability depended by and large upon the judgment of a single staff member, the interviewer. His was a grave responsibility indeed.

The situational tests were designed to evoke responses to provoking and stressful stimuli. There was no thought that they would supply us with true work samples, nor were the provoking situations closely similar to any that might be anticipated in the field. They were, in a sense, caricatures of field situations. Had the situations in our tests been more conventional and less provoking, the returns from them in the way of personality data would have been diminished considerably. There was no expectation that the emotional response to the provocation would be a direct and unequivocal manifestation of our conception of Emotional Stability. Invariably the behavior in the situations had to be interpreted in the context of the data gathered from all other sources; by itself it might mean a great deal or virtually nothing. Occasionally a candidate would make a creditable and stable response to the stressful situation of a test and yet, in the final judgment of the staff, have poor promise of emotional stability in the field. Conversely, some of the candidates who seemed, on other scores, to possess stable and mature emotionality were genuinely, though perhaps superficially, upset during the provoking situational tests.

The importance of the incidental observations which were made during an assessment period lay mainly in the fact that they provided a wide sampling of manifest behavior in respect to poise, social self-confidence, and apparent social needs. They yielded a picture of the manner in which a candidate handled himself when little more was required of him than that he be a social being. In many cases, a candidate's patterns of social

where the staff was also under pressure. As a policy, assessment units used all the time that was available.

At no time during the period of assessment in the Far East were men recruited in numbers sufficiently large to permit as high a rejection rate as the staff would have liked. The demands for agent personnel were almost equal to the rate of recruiting, and each man rejected by assessment meant a delay in sending operators into the field. Borderline cases were carefully scrutinized and often passed with qualifications if they seemed suitable for any type of work. This compromise would not have been necessary if the recruiting branch had provided a larger sample. This need for compromise between quality and quantity added to the problems of assessment and increased the probability of error.

A problem that was recognized, but for which no solution was found, was the variation in attitudes toward the Oriental by American personnel and the attendant variation in the treatment he received. During the period of assessment every effort was made to become acquainted with the recruit as an individual. In order to do this, more courtesies and greater considerations were extended to him than Europeans are wont to extend. Besides conforming to the basic assumption that it was due him, this treatment was rewarding in terms of better cooperation. But it was more friendly and sympathetic than the treatment meted out to him by the average American soldier. This difference became an important issue in the field in some instances. The failures of a few native agents on missions were explained by claiming that they had been spoiled during the training period by luxuries and an unduly solicitous attitude. When returned to their native ways of life, as is often necessary under field conditions, they became resentful or defiant. Complete reports are not available on this point, but it is altogether probable that a contributing factor was the scornful, if not abusive, manner of the typical GI.

Security was another problem with which assessment had to deal. There was constant danger that candidates would learn too much about the organization during the period of testing and that those who were rejected and returned to the place of recruitment would carry information with them that should not be spread abroad. This problem was eventually solved in South East Asia Command (SEAC) by establishing the assessment unit in India, thus removing recruits from all possible contact with training and operations conducted in Ceylon. The problem did not exist in China, for there were so many potential leaks via interpreter, houseboys, and the like that it was useless to take precautions.

Among the ever-present problems was that of the lack of men trained in assessment methods. Something was accomplished by training the American personnel assigned to the unit to serve as assistants, but they, as a rule, were not permanently attached. The interpreters on the staff were also changing

constantly, so that during some of the time the senior staff members had the benefit of no observations other than those which they were able to make for themselves.

A small staff restricted the scope of the testing program and complicated the problem of scheduling. During interviews conducted by the senior staff members, for example, many individual and group tests could not be given because for these the presence of an experienced observer is required. Since an interview conducted through an interpreter often lasted from three to five hours, this procedure took up an appreciable slice of the day. The problem was met by having a longer assessment period.

The assessment programs varied from place to place according to the conditions and requirements in the theater. In terms of staff, in Ceylon there were two senior members, eight instructors, and two interpreters; in India, one on the senior staff, three instructors, and two interpreters; in Kunning, four senior staff members and seven junior staff members who were also interpreters; and in Hsian, one on the senior staff, one instructor, and three interpreters. That is only part of the picture, however, for the rate at which recruits were processed varied. In Ceylon approximately 120 men were assessed in eight months; in India 20 men in one month; in Kunning approximately 800 men in thirty days; and in Hsian 40 men in ten days.

The type of assignment for which the men were being trained, as indicated earlier, also varied. In Ceylon, India, and Hsian (China), the men were to operate in occupied country as individuals or in small groups of four to six, while those in Kunning (China) were to be trained to work in combat intelligence units of approximately 180 men.

In spite of these differences in operating conditions and in requirements, the methods employed by assessment throughout the Far East were similar, varying only in details. An interview, even though very short, was always part of the schedule. Outdoor group tests were invariably included, the problems selected being those best suited to the terrain at hand. Individual tests were also given, the number depending upon the amount of time available. Psychometric tests of one sort or another were likewise considered essential. The unique features of assessment in each of these theaters are described in the sections following.

#### ASSESSMENT IN CEYLON

Twenty miles from Kandy in the mountains of central Ceylon, assessment set up its first headquarters in the Far East. It was to be known as Camp K. The quarters, high on a hill in the center of a 1,500-acre tea and rubber plantation, commanded a view of rugged tropical country for miles around. Two building units were available for use, close together as the crow would fly across the canyon which separated them, but two miles by a winding road. The larger unit consisted of what had been the Mount School, and was the

place where the recruits were housed and where most of the classes and interviews were held. The smaller unit, the Eastern Bungalow, provided quarters and office space for several members of the staff, as well as for a few recruits who had to be kept separate from the others for reasons of security.

There was much to be done here before the assessment unit could be put into smooth operation. After the two staff members from Washington had arrived, there were instructors and interpreters to be found and trained, a clubhouse in bad need of repair to be put in order, and a program of assessment to be developed which would mesh with the needs of the training and operating branches of the organization. Supplies were scarce, and the OSS was new in the theater, so that the problems of administration were for a while acute. Work began immediately, however, and during the course of the following period these difficulties were ironed out and a program was evolved adapted to the plans for operations in that theater.

Candidates were obtained from many sources. Some were recruited in India, where the recruiting branch of the organization had its headquarters. These were for the most part Chinese who during the war had filtered out of India from Burma, Malaya, and Indo-China. They were selected for their familiarity with those regions. Few of them were native born; rather, they classified themselves as "overseas Chinese." Some recruits were obtained from northern Burma and Assam. The Karens came from these areas. Others were secured by the British, in a sense impressed into service, for they were picked up from junks by submarines cruising along the coasts of Burma and India, and after interrogation, would be turned over to the Americans. Some were obtained in the United States, and some in Ceylon.

For reasons already indicated, the descriptions of the candidates in terms of personality variables presented problems. Although these variables were used as points of reference, they were not emphasized, and statements about them were qualified. An effort was made, however, to give as full and complete a sketch of the recruit's total personality as possible. Patterns of behavior, basic drives, and anxieties were looked for and evaluated. In view of the fact that the recruits would have to pass a rigorous course in training and the fact that the exact nature of their assignment was unknown, the staff attempted to predict performance at the training camp as well as performance on missions. Not infrequently recommendations were made as to the kind of work for which a candidate was best fitted, as well as the kind of work for which he was least fitted.

The problems of assessing Orientals, with their wide range of cultural backgrounds and language differences, were such as to make the longest practical assessment period advisable. Fortunately time was to be had. A three weeks' program, it was judged, would not impede the schedule of planned operations. But in order to advance the men as rapidly as possible it was decided to give them basic instruction in the courses which

they were to take later at the training camp and to assess them while they were engaged in these activities. This plan had certain definite advantages. Assessment could concern itself with specific skills and qualities of personality necessary for the job. It could serve as a probational period of training. Further, by burying assessment in training exercises the staff could operate, as it were, under cover. To all appearances they were instructors, not assessors. Accepting it as a training school, the recruit would be less apt to put on the protective cloak worn by a man who feels that he is under the eye of scientific scrutiny.

The procedures which constituted the final program of assessment in Ceylon can be grouped into three categories: Clinical Interview and Psychometric Tests; Group Situations; and Training Exercises.

**Interview.**—The Interview was usually conducted through an interpreter with objectives that were essentially the same as those accepted in the United States. It was directed first at obtaining a detailed account of the life history of the recruit, beginning with the first events he could remember. For the interviewer the recurrent question from first to last was: "Is this situation typical of the man's culture or is this a special, fortunate or unfortunate, circumstance to which he was exposed?" The interpreter was often of help here, for he could describe the customary pattern of life at this age in this environment. The incidence of bed wetting, for example, until the age of seven or eight was frequent, but it was found that the parents paid little attention to this habit. People in their community did not use cinderdown mattresses and white sheets and quilts, but slept on straw mats on the floor with a rough blanket, and it made little difference whether bladder control was learned early or late. Such problems call attention to the background of cultural knowledge which is required of assessors, some of which must be obtained during the Interview. This, to some extent, accounts for its much greater length—four or five hours in most cases.

Although attempts at deception were encountered frequently, for example, to conceal desertion from the Chinese Army or to conceal the use of opium, at the end of the Interview it was usually felt that a reasonably accurate history had been obtained. The attitude of these men toward the Interview was generally naïve; questions directed at determining beliefs, habits, and attitudes were answered frankly and often with less embarrassment or self-consciousness than is found in North American culture. The Interview, as in the United States, formed the nucleus about which were fitted the observations of behavior made in other situations.

**Psychometric Tests.**—Psychometric tests were given soon after the recruits arrived at Camp K. Included in this battery were the Non-Language Tests 2a and 2c from the Adjutant General's Office; the Series Completion, Paper

noodles and chicken with melon for dessert by four successive classes. Each group carried up a wicker basket containing three or four irate chickens, which was placed with other supplies at the feet of Buddha. At suppertime the chickens were dispatched, cleaned, dressed, and immediately thrown into the pot. Barely were they heated when they were being served to us with the noodles. The mixture was savory despite the sinewy meat, for the native seasoning and some accidental additions gave a flavor that was unique.

Facilities and utensils for the preparation of this meal were limited: a mud-brick Chinese stove, a pot for the coffee, and a square GI water carrier for the remainder were all that were provided. This limitation on equipment added both to the problems and to the interest. Although the fare was simple, teamwork and planning were necessary to produce it, and useful data were usually obtained during this hour and a half of eager activity.

The informal atmosphere belied the fact that this was a test. Following dinner, interviews were continued until approximately ten in the evening. At that time the recruits were called together for a group discussion. This session, held by candlelight, was conducted in the usual way, but proved to be more productive than it had been with the Chinese. The difference was probably due to the higher average educational level of the group and to the greater uniformity in age. Further, there were no problems as a result of differences in dialects.

Testing on the second day began after a K ration breakfast. The Interviews were continued, and at the same time the Demolition Test was given. For the latter, as in Calcutta, the men were taken in small groups to a point near the camp. Through the interpreter they were given a brief description of the methods of using TNT. Then under supervision, each man prepared and set off a charge himself. The method of scoring was the same as had been used previously.

A hike farther up the canyon was scheduled late in the morning. K rations were carried for lunch en route. The climb was a rugged one and as much yielded data on the physical condition of the men. In addition, there were points along the way which were particularly well suited for group tests. In a wooded section where the canyon was deep, the Bridge Construction problem was presented, using the same materials and instructions in Kunming. Later the Cliff Scaling problem was introduced.

**Cliff Scaling.**—A two-hour climb up the trail from camp brought the candidates to a granite cliff which rose approximately thirty feet from the floor of the canyon. Working from the top, the men were required to devise a safe means for the group to descend to the bottom. They were provided with rope, but were told that it would be necessary to carry it with them after the last man had descended. No one was forced to attempt the descent and there were frequent refusals. When the group had

completed the construction, some were unwilling both to descend and to ascend. This test provided additional measures of the same traits as revealed in Bridge Construction, but it yielded in addition another measure of daring.

**Weapons Test.**—The Weapons Test followed Cliff Scaling at a point on the trail where there was a suitable range. As in Calcutta, it was not given to provide a measure of marksmanship, but as an opportunity to observe any indications of timidity in the use of weapons, a mild but, nevertheless, frequently revealing test.

Following this, the group started back to camp. This completed the test program. The men packed their equipment, policed the area, and departed in time to meet the truck in the valley below at five o'clock.

**Summary of Results.**—As is evident from Table 22, the number of men who were not qualified for agent work was large. In addition to the fact that the standards for qualifications were high, the motivation of most of the men for agent work in Korea was low. Many of the recruits had deserted from the Japanese Army and were reluctant to expose themselves to the danger of recapture. Their lack of drive and resolution had not been communicated to their Korean officers at Eagle Camp. To have admitted their fears would probably have involved the loss of "face."

TABLE 22

Summary of Results of the Hsian Assessment Project

Passed	Failed	Reasons for failure			
		Motivation	Emotional Stability	Effective Intelligence	
21	19	10	6	3	

But the Interview, which was specifically directed toward the assessment of this disposition, was for them an easily accepted invitation to express their worries. Although in many cases they would not admit anxiety, they often called attention to some physical disability or weakness which they believed would preclude work in the field, despite the fact that these disabilities were not noticeable in the group tests or on the mountain climb, both of which required physical strength and endurance.

On the other hand, motivation in these men was high for work in the

Korean postwar government. There was a general appreciation of the fact that they, as selected personnel of the Korean Independence Army and closely associated with the Korean Provisional Government, would have opportunities in that field at the end of the war. In a large percentage of the cases interest did not extend much beyond this; patriotism, defined as a willingness to sacrifice one's life for one's country, was all but absent.

In seeking an explanation for this, it was observed that low motivation was far more prevalent among college graduates than among noncollege men. Several correlated factors were involved. Those who had been able to afford a college education came from Korean families who had, in general, not fared badly under Japanese rule; several of the recruits had attended universities in Japan. Those who had not been to college, on the other hand, were more frequently from families to whom the Japanese had not found it necessary to make concessions, were members of economic groups which had felt more sharply the discriminations made in favor of Japanese residents in Korea. For them freedom from Japanese domination held definite rewards, and for them the hate engendered by injustice, rather than an intellectual appreciation of the advantages of freedom, was the primary factor determining their willingness to face danger.

Affecting the motivation of the whole group was the fact that none of these men had ever lived in Korea when it was not Japanese-dominated. The freedom to which they were looking forward was a very vague ideal to them. Perhaps in some cases their families, as collaborators, stood to lose by Japan's defeat.

#### COMMENTS

In surveying the work of assessment in the Far East, it seems evident now that a better job could have been done if the recruiting of candidates had been conducted with greater energy. Failure of recruiters to provide men in excess of the needs of the operating branches, due either to the scarcity of available personnel or to other reasons, very materially increases the problems of assessment. The reason for this is straightforward: if the assessment branch of an organization is forced by the demands of the operating branches to weigh their urgent needs against the risk of passing a doubtful recruit, then the chances for error by assessment are greatly increased. Contrariwise, the chances for error are diminished if all doubtful cases can be rejected.

This problem is a statistical one which has important implications. If we assume that assessment is essentially a complex test, the rules which have been found to hold in using the intelligence tests or special aptitude tests as selection devices should be applicable to the screening process as a whole. The particular rule which is pertinent here is this: in the selection of a given number of men by means of a test possessing a fairly high validity,

the *average ability* of those finally selected will *increase* as the size of the sample tested increases. And as a corollary to this: the probability of error in the selection process decreases with an increase in the size of the sample tested. Furthermore, a test of low validity may still be useful if the sample from which selections are made is large. These statistical rules, so pertinent to the recruiting policy of an organization, are too frequently overlooked.

Recruiting for any organization should be as active as is consistent with the resources of the assessment unit, in terms of funds and personnel. Much can be done by an assessment unit to accommodate itself to volume without a great increase in operating costs. For example, coarse screening tests can be administered which will immediately eliminate recruits who do not possess the minimum required ability in some important specific variable. This technique was employed in China, where ability to read was an essential qualification. There the number of men initially brought in from near-by holding areas was well over a thousand. By simply asking those who could read to step forward, the first step in screening was accomplished. This reduced the group to less than half its original size. Then by a one-minute, objectively scored reading test the number of candidates was still further reduced. Only those who remained took part in the more elaborate and expensive personality assessment procedures.